

# Christian Initiation of Adults

Augustine Carrillo • Coordinator • Christian Initiation of Adults  
215-587-5630 • [acarrill@adphila.org](mailto:acarrill@adphila.org) • [www.archphila.org](http://www.archphila.org)

## Focus on the Rite—Period of Inquiry

### Parish Sponsors

In the Catholic Church, accompanying someone on their journey of initiation is like the birthing of a child. As they learn what it means to be Catholic and discover the rich tradition of our Church, they awaken to a new way of living life. The role of the sponsor is to be a companion; the task is to walk with them, guiding them through the process of the Church toward full initiation.

The official ministry of a parish sponsor begins when the candidate enters into a time of pastoral formation, called the **Period of Catechumenate**. This period can extend for several months or several years, depending on the journey of the candidate. The first official act of the parish sponsor will be to introduce, and witness on behalf of, your inquirer at the **Rite of Acceptance**.

Your unofficial role may begin during the period of inquiry, or Precatechumenate. Parishes vary in when they assign parish sponsors. Parish sponsors may be assigned to someone that has never been baptized or a person who was baptized in another Christian tradition or who was baptized Catholic but never received any formation in the Church.

(*Foundations in Faith*, pp. 2-3 RCL)

August 31, 2009

### **Institute for Christian Initiation**

Beginning this October, the Archdiocese will inaugurate the *Institute for Christian Initiation*. This certificate program will provide a thorough introduction to the richness and complexity of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*.

A brochure for this program is available on-line at the Archdiocesan RCIA webpage.



### Initiation library

*Year-round Catechumenate*  
By Mary Birmingham

With its helpful treatment of the rite as a whole and the community's role within it, *Year-Round Catechumenate* will help pastors, initiation teams, liturgy committees, and other ministers imagine, envision, understand, and implement a year-round catechumenate in the parish.

Published by Liturgy  
Training Publications.  
ISBN: 1-56854-412-X

“Traits of an Effective Sponsor” is taken from Fr. Ron Lewinski’s book *Guide for Sponsors*, 3rd Edition.

- **A Sponsor Prays**, prayer properly disposes a sponsor for this special ministry.
- **A Sponsor Listens**, good listening can create the right climate for sharing between a sponsor and candidate.
- **A Sponsor is Respectful**, our love and respect will allow a candidate to feel comfortable and trusting enough to talk about issues without feeling embarrassed or anxious about how we may respond.
- **A Sponsor Serves as a Bridge**, between the catechumen or candidate and the church.
- **A Sponsor Respects the Candidate’s Freedom**, in welcoming the inquirer, we must respect their right to decide for themselves whether they want to pursue church membership.
- **A Sponsor Lives in the World with Hope**, an effective sponsor is one who is in touch with the world as it is, both the good and the bad, and who chooses to live in hope.